THE MAYORS' INSTITUTE ON

CITY DESIGN

Design Arts Program, National Endowment for the Arts Spring 1992

Mayor Vialle Connects Tacoma to the Water

We're doing big stuff in design," said Mayor Karen Vialle (MICD: VIII) about what has occurred in Tacoma, WA—particularly a new project to link the city's center with its waterfront and the mountains beyond.

Located on Commencement Bay of Puget Sound, Tacoma has over fifty miles of waterfront, much of which is now owned by the city. The downtown waterfront had been the site of the city's wharves in the 19th century and had since been used industrially.

"I've had dreams for years about this old industrial area which was in decay," said Vialle, who decided to consider the waterfront of her city as part of her issue at the Mayor's Institute on City Design.

Vialle presented an overall issue of downtown redevelopment, focusing on the the city's waterfront and its revitalization efforts: the city had authorized purchase of some 19 acres of old railroad land along the bay in 1991 for $26 million. In addition, a new $35 million state historical society building was going in nearby, as well as a $60 million project to renovate the city's historic train station as a federal court house. The University of Washington has also announced plans for a 60-acre campus in the area, totalling some $400 million in new investments in the immediate downtown/waterfront neighborhood.

When Vialle presented the issue of the freeway as a barrier between the city and its waterfront, the Mayors' Institute resource team suggested a lid over the freeway as a way to provide a symbolic link to the water.

"One of the unique things of the site is the view to the east—Mount Rainier and the water are beautiful."

Tacoma, WA, Mayor Karen Vialle

Returning to Tacoma, Vialle addressed the issue with city staff and designers. Further study revealed that the freeway had been designed to accommodate a pedestrian bridge. The city decided to act on the advice

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Alumni Mayors Take MICD Agenda Home

At the 1992 U.S. Conference of Mayors midwinter meeting in Washington, the Mayors' Institute on City Design held its second alumni breakfast, where mayors discussed projects which they had been working on since the institute. Mayors' Institute alumni were anxious to hear what their colleagues had done after attending the institute. Many of the mayors expressed the opinion that by making them aware of the opportunities which good development and city design can bring to a city, the Mayors' Institute had initiated a continuing process.

There was unanimous agreement that the mayors wished for some kind of follow-up to the session. Mayor Steve Hettinger of Huntsville, AL, summed the mayors' opinions when he described the excitement generated in his planning department by the ideas that he brought back from the institute.

Although the Mayors' Institute does not fund follow up programs, many mayors have pursued ideas generated at the institute in a variety of ways. Some have used contacts from the institute to increase public support of city design, while others have made use of local organizations, such as arts councils or universities, to provide design services.

Mayor Kay Granger of Fort Worth, TX, was faced with what she described as "one of the worst designs" for an addition to the city library. Before she could move on the project, Mayor Granger knew that she had to stimulate community involvement on public design in Fort Worth. After attending MICD: XI in Charlottesville last October, Mayor Granger invited Mayor Joseph Riley to visit her city and give his talk on urban design and preservation in Charleston, SC.

The open lecture drew a wide audience and has stimulated debate in Fort Worth about city design. Meanwhile, Mayor Granger has terminated the contract for the addition and the city will hold a design competition to get the results that she believes the city deserves.

Other mayors have looked to local universities as resources for implementing ideas conceived during the institute. Mayor Janice Stork returned to Lancaster, PA, from MICD: XI and realized

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Augusta Sponsors Design Workshop

The City of Augusta, under the leadership of Mayor Charles DeVaney, found an exciting and effective means to renew its downtown vision. Five nationally respected city design professionals came to Augusta for an intense workshop last November and left civic leaders with a clear set of planning principles and a good sense of what ought to be considered to make the most of Augusta's natural and cultural assets. Some of the issues included improving access to the Savannah river, expanded arts facilities, a convention center and a new baseball stadium among others. Mayor DeVaney, an alumnus of MICD: South, noted that Augusta offered a host of issues and opportunities that, with vision and a cooperative effort, could be a model for other cities. The team represented urban design, architecture, planning and landscape architecture and its members had served as faculty for MICD.

Participation by key civic leaders, lenders, merchants and land owners provided the workshop with a good idea of the history and aspirations of the city and set a tone of cooperation. The interaction also served as an introduction to the issues and the city's design goals and process which allowed the designers to focus immediately on the issues at hand. Monty Osteen, founding member and former President of Augusta Tomorrow, said "I was very pleased and surprised they were able to grasp a lot of the problems and opportunities facing us in only 48 hours."

The process involved a tour of the downtown followed by presentations and discussion with civic leaders. After this information review ended in the early afternoon of the first day came a round of hard work by the design team which spent the rest of the afternoon assessing the city, its resources and what they heard from the locals to come up with some preliminary ideas.

The morning of the second day found the team taking these ideas to a clearer and more refined stage using drawings and detailed recommendations. By noon, they were ready to present their conclusions to Mayor DeVaney. Realigning the auto entrance to the city, identifying an old canal as a heritage corridor, and maintaining side-street access and open views to the river were among the group's recommendations. The workshop concluded with a presentation to the public through a press event at the City Council Chambers.

This type of intense workshop, with focused goals, civic participation and a diverse group of design team members is a way to generate a clear picture of what is possible. Everyone involved in the Augusta workshop understands that implementing the ideas is time consuming and hard work, but without clear goals and a sense of the city as a whole both time, talent and money can easily be wasted. By sketching out ideas the program helped civic leaders visualize Augusta's present assets and future potential and crystallized what could have taken months through incremental reports and studies. As Mayor DeVaney noted, "I cannot stress enough the importance of that visit in stimulating our local citzens to action." ■

AUGUSTA RESOURCE TEAM	SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
Grover Mouton artist/architect	• redesign the highway entrance to Augusta
Diana Balmori landscape architect	• establish connections to key city features using the existing street grid
Michael Dobbins city planner/urban designer	• develop the Augusta canal as a heritage corridor
Dennis Jones architect/computer engineer	• enhance views of the river; avoid "walling it off"
Barton Phelps architect	• cultural amenities, including a performing arts center, museum and baseball stadium, should become the focus of the riverwalk

(MAYOR VIALLE, continued from page 1)
from the Mayors' Institute and began to pursue the concept of a pedestrian bridge crossing the freeway to a large waterfront park.

As a result, the city has recently completed an initial design for the pedestrian bridge across the interstate highway, working with the National Park Service to develop an interpretive park for the region's landscape. The project, called "A Walk on the Mountain," will illustrate the city's relationship with the Olympic Mountains and Puget Sound, providing sensory and physical features encountered on the descent from Mt. Rainier at 14,000 feet to sea level.

The park's preliminary conception and design was paid for by $100,000 in urban park funds from the National Park Service; construction is scheduled to begin in 1994 at the cost of about $13 million, from a combination of federal, state, local and private funds. The project is typical for Tacoma of the results which can be generated from partnerships between the public and private sectors.

In addition to the waterfront link, Mayor Vialle is considering other aspects of city design as a result of her involvement in the Mayors' Institute.

"I've made urban design and planning an agenda in the city," she said, citing other issues, such as the construction of a performing arts center, two theater restorations, and environmental and ecological planning, in addition to the downtown revitalization and the new university campus.

"If I hadn't gone to the Mayors' Institute, it wouldn't be happening as it is," said Vialle about the positive results of her efforts to clean up the waterfront.

"I'd encourage mayors to go to the Institute to deal with problems in their cities—from neighborhood to major downtown redevelopment projects." ■

MICD: XI
October 1991

University of Virginia

RESOURCE TEAM

Alan Brangman
Design Arts Program

Terry Brooks
architect/urban designer

Warren Byrd
landscape architect

Robert Campbell
architectural critic

Joan Goody
architect/urban designer

Judith Kinnard
architect

Florence Ladd
sociologist

Stephen Lockwood
transportation specialist

Patricia O'Brien
landscape architect

Mayor Joseph Riley
Charleston, SC (keynote)

Jaquelin Robertson
architect/urban designer

MAYORS AND DESIGN PROBLEMS

The Honorable Harry "Butch" Felker, Topeka, KS: What elements should a streetscaping project target? Issues of parking, landscaping and public amenities were discussed as means of attracting people and retail back to the downtown core.

The Honorable Kay Granger, Fort Worth, TX: How to promote a comprehensive highway corridor cleanup program to stimulate community activity and development in decaying neighborhoods.

The Honorable Steve Hettinger, Huntsville, AL: How should the city design and develop a 175-acre recreational park on an abandoned airport? Funds are short and public perception of the site is poor.

The Honorable Jan Laverty Jones, Las Vegas, NV: How can the city provide attractive transportation corridors and improve design to make downtown more competitive with the Strip. Can the city prevent an exodus of business and people?

The Honorable Terry J. McKane, Lansing, MI: Design options of a 50-acre mixed-use project located within the urban core. How to make the project integrate with the existing communities and fit into the existing city grid.

The Honorable Louis E. Saavedra, Albuquerque, NM: Revitalization program in the center city must identify potential uses and designs for an eight-block section linking different neighborhoods.

The Honorable Janice C. Stork, Lancaster, PA: How best to develop a 130-acre peninsula located one mile from downtown. An auto salvage, a hazardous waste-polluted quarry and scattered ownership are obstacles to any development, be it housing or recreational parks.

MICD: West
November 1991

University of California, Berkeley

Alan Brangman
Design Arts Program

Paula Collins
real estate developer

Robert Conradt
transportation engineer

Frances Halsband
architect

Randolf Hester
landscape architect

Allan Jacobs
city planner

Bruce Liedstrand
city manager/lawyer

Donlyn Lyndon
architect/urban designer

Anne Vernez Moudon
architect/urban designer

Gregory Tung
architect/urban designer

Carol Whiteside
former mayor (keynote)

The Honorable Dan Albert, Monterey, CA: As the city acquires beachfront property for a public park, how should it address a major road which bisects the proposed park area? How can the thoroughfare's presence be beneficial to the community?

The Honorable Ken Forgia, Peoria, AZ: In a rapidly expanding community, can a commitment to restoring and revitalizing the historic core be realized to preserve the character of the old community amid the suburban sprawl?

The Honorable Patricia Hilligoss, Petaluma, CA: How to develop a 10-acre site which connects the downtown core to the turning basin of the Petaluma River. What types of development are appropriate for the city?

The Honorable Dan Kelleher, Kent, WA: How can the city identify its distinct character and work with private investment to create an urban core that is faithful to that vision. How to place a commuter train station to stimulate downtown development.

The Honorable Susan Kirkpatrick, Fort Collins, CO: Developing plans for a river basin which includes a gravel mining operation, a wastewater treatment plant, a community learning center and floodplains. Discussion targeted proposals for community input.

The Honorable Tim Swanson, Bozeman, MT: How can the design of a new performing arts center ensure that the center serves as a focal point for downtown? Concerns included the effect of the development on the Main Street area, integration with the city's appearance and how to handle parking.

MICD: Midwest January 1992

University of Minnesota

RESOURCE TEAM

John Archer
urban historian

Alan Brangman
Design Arts Program

Catherine Brown
landscape architect

Rick Chellman
transportation engineer

Nancy Rutledge Connery
infrastructure consultant

David Dillon
architectural critic

Alex Krieger
architect/urban designer

Fidel Lopez
developer/urban designer

Weiming Lu
urban development

William Morrish
architect/urban designer

Mayor Joseph Riley
Charleston, SC (keynote)

John Shaw
developer

Charles Zucker
architect

MAYORS AND DESIGN PROBLEMS

The Honorable Tomilea Allison, Bloomington, IN: The city plans to renovate an old factory building for office space and share it with the University of Indiana. What can be done to revitalize this part of the town? Industrial/warehouse area with great potential.

The Honorable Kathryn Bloomberg, Brookfield, WI: Placement of a new interstate highway exit into a town's Main Street and its possible impact on landscape and ecology, neighborhoods and character of the town.

The Honorable Donald Fracassi, Southfield, MI: Creation of a civic center and commercial "downtown" in a previously suburban community. How to use design guidelines to engender a richer urban environment.

The Honorable Alan Larson, Schaumburg, IL: Development of an historic town center. How to create a genuine focus for the suburbs without incorporating strip malls or developing Disneyland-like architecture.

The Honorable Janet Majerus, University City, MO: Strategies to deal with a landmark commercial/theater building on older suburb's main street. What are the possibilities to develop a deteriorated structure under private control?

The Honorable Robert Paulson, Solon, OH: Development of growing suburb's commercial crossroads into a more cohesive, pedestrian-oriented center. How to integrate a civic building and a train station in a precinct defined by highways and strip development.

The Honorable Robert Walters, Lawrence, KS: Proposal to extend a state highway to bypass town in river flood plain. Issues of access to city and new developments as well as zoning restrictions and environmental planning in a river valley.

MICD: South April 1992

Tulane University

Alan Brangman
Design Arts Program

Susanne Brendel-Pandich
preservationist

Robert Davis
developer/urban planner

Mayor Charles DeVaney
Augusta, GA (keynote)

Michael Dobbins
city planner/urban designer

Ronald Filson
architect

Joan Goody
architect/urban designer

Dennis Jones
architect/computer engineer

Donlyn Lyndon
architect/urban designer

Grover Mouton
artist/architect

Barton Phelps
architect

Tim Ryan
economist

The Honorable David Adkisson, Owensboro, KY: How will a new bridge and four-lane highway into the city change the development and growth of the city? How should the city prepare for these changes?

The Honorable Patricio Ahumada, Brownsville, TX: What are the potential uses for an historic public market which now houses the city hall, and how can the area best realize its potential as a tourist attraction and the center of new businesses.

The Honorable Kenneth Broun, Chapel Hill, NC: What steps should be taken in a thriving downtown to help it maintain its local character in the face of traffic congestion, vanishing air and open spaces, and a low-income housing shortage?

The Honorable Barbara Crews, Galveston, TX: How can development and design improve Seawall Boulevard, a congested thoroughfare along the Gulf of Mexico. What uses could be encouraged by zoning, comprehensive guidelines, and innovative design.

The Honorable Geraldine Montgomery, Paducah, KY: What issues are important for the city to consider as it chooses a site for a public meeting hall among three options adjacent to the Ohio River.

The Honorable Donald Trotter, Clarksville, TN: As local entrepeneurs work to improve small areas of downtown, what type of streetscaping plan should the city adopt? What should the city look for in proposals to renovate its streets?

The Honorable Robert Walker, Vicksburg, MS: How can a number of interrelated issues be coordinated to revitalize the city's central business district. Key issues include public development of a green space corridor, the impact of riverboat gambling, and siting a proposed convention center.

(MICD ALUMNI, continued from page 1)

that her city had not had a comprehensive plan adopted since 1945. Her planning department contacted Columbia University and made plans for professors Clifford Ellis and Lionel McIntyre to bring in their spring studio of students from the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation.

The students will identify specific issues for Lancaster to address in its comprehensive plan. They will begin the process of putting together a "citizen's plan," gathering input and identifying design priorities from the various communities in Lancaster. The students' primary method will be open-ended interviewing of key individuals, with a special emphasis on reaching different communities.

Eric Hinderliter, director of Lancaster's Department of Housing and Community Development, explains that "what the city wants is for the students to give them the right questions, so that when a new comprehensive plan is made, it will properly address the economic and demographic changes facing the city." When professional consultants are hired to make a plan, this study will ensure that the important issues facing Lancaster have been analyzed and that the community has been involved in designing aplan for future growth.

Professors Ellis and McIntyre challenged their students to provide a valuable tool for the community. "To produce a good plan, the city must move beyond symptoms, buzzwords and vague statements. We need to provide the city with coherent, empirically grounded explanations of the problems it faces."

Last spring, following the first MICD: West session, a group of students and faculty from the graduate program of the College of Environmental Design at the University of California, Berkeley, worked with Mayor Nancy Flemming of Eureka, CA, to help focus public attention on possibilities for the future of the her city's waterfront. The study team, an architecture and urban design studio led by professors Donlyn Lyndon and Edward Arens, travelled to Eureka to conduct an analysis of existing activities, trace historic development patterns and identify likely development opportunities. With Mayor Flemming's guidance, they met city staff and commissions and with members of the local development community.

On returning to Berkeley, the study team consolidated their observations and identified four distinct areas along the waterfront. They then considered a number of alternate scenarios for development of vacant land or rehabilitation of underutilized structures within each of these areas, paying special attention to the influence each site might have on its neighbors.

The students on the team each prepared an illustrative design for one site within the waterfront area. This allowed the work to be presented as a series of models and drawings, each representing a specific project that would serve the overall goals of the urban design plan. Projects included locating a new public library, a fish market at the site of the former ferry landing, a small waterfront hotel, a housing complex, a boat house and an ecological center.

The students returned to Eureka to present their recommendations and illustrations at a city meeting and to discuss their proposals with interested citizens and the local press. As in the case of Lancaster, the students' work served to stimulate community involvement, a vital part of any comprehensive plan with vision.

Professor Lyndon is currently planning a similar project this spring in Petaluma, CA, with Mayor Patricia Hilligoss, who attended MICD: West in October 1991.

After attending MICD: South in 1991, Mayor Charles DeVaney began a movement to re define Augusta's downtown vision and encourage revitalization. Working with the Mayors' Institute, DeVaney held a two-day workshop with civic leaders and designers from around the country, generating a clear set of planning and design principles for the city. The workshop concluded with a presentation to the public of specific recommendations, including focusing development of a cultural and recreational corridor along the city's riverfront. *(See article p. 2.)*

Clearly, what works for one city might not for another. In Fort Worth, there was an existing design for a library addition; what was necessary was to stimulate community discussion and input. In Augusta, designers were necessary to generate examples of a vision for the city. One city had a design that ignored the site and a community that was left out, while the other city had a community waiting to go, but needed some actual designs to put on the table and give the discussion direction and focus. In both cases, the mayors realized what their cities needed and pursued their goals independently. ■

Mayor Janice Stork (left foreground) at the table during MICD: XI, October, 1991

MICD Wins National Honor Awards

The Mayors' Institute on City Design has been named a recipient of the 1992 AIA Institute Honor Award. The award will be presented at the American Institute of Architects National Convention on June 19 in Boston, MA. Alan Brangman, assistant director of the Design Arts Program of the NEA and the Mayors' Institute project director, will receive the award at the convention.

The AIA Institute Honor recognizes collaborative achievements leading to the integration of several disciplines related to architecture or urban design. The Mayors' Institute, which promotes dialogue and collaboration between mayors, urban designers, and a host of other professionals with experience in American cities, was selected by a jury which met in Washington at the AIA headquarters last November.

In addition, *Metropolitan Home* Magazine honored the Mayors' Institute with a 1992 Design 100 Award in April. The Mayors' Institute was cited for providing mayors with "the discipline to redraw cities, to preserve historic buildings and walkable streets, to restore pride of place—and civic pride."

The article noted that MICD "does not promise instant success but encourages mayors to launch a new direction. Many Americans have stopped believing that urban ills can be cured. The heartening lesson from this school is that others are still trying—and hoping."

PHOTO CREDITS:
Page 1 - Mayor Karen Vialle, *Gayle Rieber, Photographer*
Page 5 - Mayor Janice Stork, *Daniel Grogan Photography*

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ALUMNI NOTES

While urban issues have suddenly become a serious issue on the national political agenda, one candidate running for president has been talking about the problems in American cities all along. **Larry Agran** (MICD Fall 1987), the former mayor of **Irvine, CA**, has been campaigning as a candidate for the democratic nomination. He has gotten his name on more than thirty caucus and primary ballots and was tied in polls with Jerry Brown and Tom Harkin in January. Although he has consistently been described as a "dark horse" candidate, he has succeeded in focusing some national attention on urban issues.

■

"The institute allowed me to expand my thinking about urban design and incorporate it into my decisions," reports **Mayor Steve Hettinger** (MICD Fall 1991). Since the institute, he has formed a "City Design Implementation Team" for **Huntsville, AL**. The team is considering, among other things, the design for a major recreational park. "The project still needs a theme to pull it all together. I want them to start thinking big," notes Mayor Hettinger.

Mayor Joyce Savocchio (MICD Fall 1990) has **Erie, PA**, moving on the project she presented to the institute. "The suggestions made by the most talented group of professionals was of great assistance in bringing focus to the Arts Complex Project now known in the city of Erie as Discovery Square. While funding is still being worked upon, the planning and architectural design is well underway and nearing completion."

■

Peoria, AZ, may soon regain its historic focal point, "an old water tower just across the train tracks, looking down on the old downtown," says **Mayor Ken Forgia** (MICD: West 1991). The city will hold a public meeting to establish a committee which will restore the tower on a site close to the original. The tower and a sidewalk repair program will be the first projects targeting an area for improvement each year.

"By beginning with the tower, which used to be a great focal point for the town, we want to jump-start a program to really bring back the old historic neighborhood."

■

Missoula, MT, has sponsored design seminars under **Mayor Dan Kemmis** (MICD Spring 1990) for the past year. The meetings provide a common base of information on design issues. "The design seminar is something anyone can do and is a great way to raise consciousness about design in the community."

CALENDAR

April 2–5, 1992	MICD Northeast: M.I.T., Cambridge, MA
April 9–12, 1992	MICD XII: University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
June 19, 1992	MICD Breakfast, U.S. Conference of Mayors, Houston, TX
October 15–17, 1992	MICD XIII: University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA
November 12–14, 1992	MICD West: University of California, Berkeley, CA
November 28–December 2, 1992	National League of Cities, New Orleans, LA